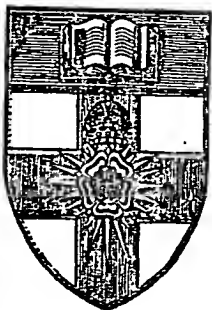


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MANIFESTO OF ROBERT OWEN

TO

THE CIVILIZED WORLD:

A SOLUTION OF THE GREAT PROBLEM OF THE AGE.

The following article from the pen of Robert Owen will give the reader some idea of the extent and character of that gentleman's persevering efforts during a period of near half a century to bring about what he conceives to be a great moral and social change in human society. The name of the writer is well known to the world, and his philanthropic efforts are known and appreciated by the wise and good both in Europe and America. Thousands who believe his plans for the alleviation of human misery to be chimerical or utopian entertain the most profound respect for the character of the writer, admire his philanthropy, and believe him to be governed in all his efforts solely by a desire to benefit the human race.

We confess that we have but an imperfect knowledge of the views of Mr. Owen's plan of banishing want and misery from the world; yet our acquaintance with him has produced a conviction in our mind that the world has produced few men who have sacrificed so much of time and money with a view to alleviate the sufferings of our race. When we see a man whose character is above reproach, bend the whole energy of his mind, expend a large fortune, and a half a century of his life, in endeavoring to eradicate the evils that afflict society, we feel as though we were looking upon one of God's noblest creatures.

Mr. Owen is now in this city, expecting soon to depart for England, and he has requested us to lay this communication before our readers. Several communications from his pen have appeared in the *Washington Union*, *National Intelligencer*, and *National Era*, the publication of which shows the respect that the intelligent editors of these journals entertain for the writer, no matter whether they agree with his views fully or not.

In publishing a long communication from Mr. Owen, the editor of the *Union* prefaces it as follows:

We cannot refuse to oblige a gentleman like Mr. Owen, for whose philanthropic character we have so much respect, whatever we think of the practicability of his plans. His name is well known to the world, and his productions have frequently appeared in the *Union*. Our sole object being to oblige one whose philanthropic motives are so well known, and who has thrown so many curious incidents into the communication which he now submits to the public.

Thousands among us consider all plans the object of which is to produce a social regeneration of society as visionary. They console themselves with the belief that God has created a large portion of his crea-

tures to suffer and starve; and, therefore, that all plans for the elevation of man, for the banishment of want, are in direct violation of what the Creator intended. We consider that all those who thus believe entertain opinions at war with every attribute of Deity. God has provided all of his creatures with ample means of support. It is blaspheming the Creator to suppose that he intended that the great mass of his creatures should be deprived of the means and enjoyments of life, while the few are surrounded with all its luxuries.

The Problem of the Age Solved.

Manifesto of Robert Owen to the Civilized World on the approaching great and happy change in the general condition of human existence.

How much longer must the world continue under the baneful influence of the fundamental errors, the most demoralising in their effects, which, while they shall be as they have hitherto been supported by the authorities of the world, cannot fail to produce wide-spread dis-union crimes and misery to the millions of all countries over the earth? Hitherto by the operations of a system based solely on false conceptions and inexperienced imaginations, the well-being and happiness of mankind, and the best and highest interests of humanity have been sacrificed. The human race, civilized and savage, have had their characters so malformed, as to force them, through life to feel, think and act always irrationally. At the present moment, the history of our race in the war now raging, (in this advanced stage toward a superior civilization) between the United States and Mexico; the quarrel of two powerful nations about the mere marriage of some young person; the supposed necessity, by other powerful nations, for extinguishing the little Republic of Cracow—the starving condition of the peasantry of Ireland, whilst surrounded by means the most abundant for the creation of illimitable wealth, these are a few amongst the numberless proofs of the fundamental errors of the existing system, as modified, even by the most advanced nations of the, so called, civilized world.

It has now become most evident to those acquainted with the past and present history of mankind, that a system based on falsehoods, opposed to all facts, now so palpable to those who reflect without prejudice, can never be made to form the character of man to be rational in thought or conduct; can never conduct society to virtue or to permanent prosperity and happiness. The lamentable effects which this system, while maintained by the authorities of the world, must produce upon the human race have been always felt and deplored. They have been explained in different ways at various periods in Europe and America, by the writer of this manifesto; explained with the view to induce the world gradually to prepare wisely and with foresight for the great coming change in human existence—a change which, more than thirty years ago, he

known and foretold, from the then unheeded extension of misdirected scientific power, and of the rapid increase among the people of general knowledge could not be long delayed. A short history of these explanations is now necessary as a preliminary to further important measures for so directing this great and inevitable change that it shall consist in the adoption of means, sure and certain, to make all, by a rational education through superior external circumstances, intelligent, active, and good; to surround all with superior wealth which will be justly distributed; to govern all most beneficially for each, and to place all that they shall be always, from their birth, within good and wise and superior circumstances; the only practical means by which men can ever be made to become good and wise and superior in the qualities of humanity.

Are there any philanthropists, philosophers, statesmen, experienced men of business or political economists, who know how to effect this change in practice? The writer of this manifesto has been long anxious to discover them either in Europe or America; but hitherto, he has sought for them in vain. His greatest pleasure would have been unobtrusively to work with, to aid, and assist such favored individuals, and if this manifesto can bring them forth, such will yet be his greatest satisfaction, for he sets no value on wealth, honors, present popularity or future fame. These from youth have appeared to him the mere playthings of early infancy of mind.

He will now enter upon a short narrative of some of his proceedings to gradually open the public mind in Europe and America to the enormous and direful errors and evils of the system under which we have all hitherto lived and suffered, and to prepare all classes, in all countries, for the change which is inevitably coming upon the world, and also to prove that he has not taken up this subject prematurely or on a light foundation.

In 1791 the writer, at the age of twenty, having had ten years previous experience in distributing wealth among all classes as now practised, had a population of five hundred men, women and children, and an important manufacturing establishment, placed under his sole direction, in Manchester, England. He commenced to govern this population on principles which to him then, as now, appeared to be true and highly beneficial for practice, although in direct opposition to the crude notions on which society had always acted, and all around him were then acting. In this experiment he was eminently successful, for these principles enabled him speedily to give an improved character to the population, and through them to the manufacture which was rapidly carried to a much higher state of perfection than had been previously attained.

In 1799, another population at New Lanark in Scotland, also came under his sole direction. It consisted at first of about thirteen hundred, and gradually extended to two thousand five hundred. There he adopted the same principles and practices which became so successful in Manchester, with increasing beneficial effects; and this experiment so eminently successful both morally and pecuniarily, that for many years it attracted the attention of strangers from all parts of the world, and continued until 1830. These experiments which at their termination extended through forty years of extensive invaluable practice, forced upon him by circumstances, were the foundation of all the writers public proceedings; and such practice was necessary to develop such results.

He had now ascertained that the world, through another system, had a prize of inestimable value to obtain as soon as the deep-rooted prejudices of latitudes and longitudes, which are at the foundation of all individual character, could be overcome, and the eyes of those trained from birth, gradually to become mentally blind,

could be opened by some process that should not create too much hatred, anger, and violence to the operators, for such has been the nature of this mental malady that to attempt its cure, created in the patients the most violent irritation and anger. To effect the object and prevent irrational excitement, an extended and accurate practical knowledge of human nature, interminable perseverance, and an undeviating temper of charity and kindness for all errors were absolutely necessary.

These qualities the writer ardently sought to acquire and always endeavored to apply them to the proceedings he is now narrating. In 1812, after he had had upwards of twenty years extensive experience in forming character and governing and upwards of thirty years, in producing and distributing wealth, he opened this subject by publishing four essays entitled "A New View of Society or the Formation of Character," based on the knowledge that an entirely new character might, and must be given to all, before society can be made to become good, wise, and happy. This work, through the aid of the British government, under Lord Liverpool's administration, was widely circulated among the governments, universities, and leading statesmen of Europe; all of whom were requested to state their objections to these new views, if they had any, on the alternate blank leaves, bound with the book for this purpose. No serious objection to the principles based solely on the unchanging laws of nature, was, or could be made from any quarter. Lord Sidmouth, as Secretary of State, sent a copy to all the Archbishops and Bishops in England and Ireland.

The principles advocated in these essays, which rapidly extended to five editions, made a convert of the Prime Minister of England, and produced a favorable effect upon a large majority of his cabinet. These essays were well received by Mr. Wilberforce, to whom one of them was dedicated; also by the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and the late Dr. Ireland, Dean of Westminster. After a severe examination and most interesting discussion with the late Bishop of Peterborough, when he was Margaret Professor in the University of Cambridge, and who was deemed the most learned theologian in Europe, having spent twelve years in the German universities, he frankly acknowledged, in his library, at midnight, after a second discussion of six hours, the unassailable truths of the principles, which he ascertained now, but never before suspected, were based on unchanging laws of nature. His Royal Highness the late Duke of Kent, was not only a disciple warmly attached to these principles and new views, but also the chairman of a committee formed to promote the writer's plans for preparing the public to carry them into effect, as soon as they should be sufficiently comprehended for practice, and their immense value to society could be made known. In fact, at this period, men in the upper ranks of life, of superior minds, who had time and inclination to investigate a subject so new, and as it first appeared, so strange, became converts; as a long list of subscribers, with large sums to their names, to forward the object, continues to testify. These sums, in the aggregate, amounted to fifty thousand pounds; but the writer, to commence his experiment required two hundred and fifty thousand pounds, as the least that could be applied to exhibit, even an imperfect model of the superior arrangement, which he contemplated. The most immediate practical effect of those essays was the establishment, by the late King of Prussia, of a national system of education, recommended in the work. An autograph from his Majesty to the writer, conveyed through his Minister at London, Baron Jacobi, expressed his entire approbation, and his determination to commence a national system immediately; and this was the next year carried into execution.

In 1815, convinced through his own experience in these causes, unwisely, permitted to remain. The practice, and seeing the effects proved in other establishments, of the baneful general custom of employing children and young persons in factories and manufactories, for so many hours daily as manufacturers were then doing, the writer induced the late Sir Robert Peel to take charge, in the House of Commons, of a bill which he had prepared for restricting the age of admission into factories to twelve, and the time per day to ten hours, with provision, also, for both sexes being instructed before entering the mills. He had previously explained the injurious effects of these practices to the leading members of both houses and had obtained the consent of a large majority of Lords and Commons to support the bill with the clauses as he had prepared them. The bill, with these clauses, is now under discussion in the House of Commons. It was, however, violently opposed by the wealthy and leading manufacturers all over the kingdom, aided by an active class calling themselves political economists, men full of imaginary theories without any of them possessing practical knowledge of national economy or results, or of human nature. In consequence they were always found to be opposed to every measure of humanity, when it interfered with their ignorant notions, however beneficial it might be to the individuals whose health and happiness were to be destroyed to maintain their false theories. Through this obstinate opposition, the bill was referred to a committee, and kept there through three sessions of Parliament to create delay under pretence of examining witnesses in order to prove it was detrimental to children from six to twelve years of age, to work them fourteen or fifteen hours per day. It was only after the fourth year of struggle that a most imperfect act passed both houses. In the two first sessions, the writer was the only advocate attending the committee in favor of this bill to give some relief to the most injured of the working population in Great Britain.

In 1816, in an address delivered at New Lanark, in Scotland, on opening the first infant school, which the writer based on a new system of instruction by sensible signs, familiar conversation, without books or punishment, and governed solely by undeviating kindness, directed by the laws of nature, or an accurate knowledge of the qualities and faculties of humanity. In this address, which was widely circulated, the causes of good and evil, as experienced in society, were fully explained, with the only remedy competent ever to remove the latter.

These schools thus commenced have become general, but in principle and in practice, sadly inferior to the original.

In this year, also, which was a period of great distress among the working classes over the kingdom, not only in manufactures and trades, but also in the agricultural districts.

At a public meeting held in the great room of the City of London tavern, to consider the cause of, and the remedy for, this unexampled distress in a time of profound peace, the late Duke of York presiding, a committee was appointed, (the late Archbishop of Canterbury chairman) to investigate this anomaly. The writer was one of this committee, and at its first meeting was requested to make a report on the subject in conformity with the explanations and new views respecting the progress and amount of mechanical power which he had stated at the meeting. He made an elaborate report upon the subject, explained in detail the causes of the general want of employment, and the principles and practices which could alone overcome the evil, and secure the population against a continual recurrence of it, and permanently protect society from the necessarily increasing danger and distress, should

the report was considered of such national importance, that the chairman and committee recommended it should be submitted to the Great Poor Law Committee of the House of Commons, presided over by Mr. Sturges Bourne, and known as Mr. Sturges Bourne's committee.

The writer being well known to all the members of both houses of parliament, presented himself, with his report, and working plans to the committee, to be examined as to the cause of, and remedy for pauperism. At that period, this committee was deemed of the highest interest. It consisted of about forty members, of the first standing in the commons, and the members had previously known of this intended examination, for it created great excitement. The members had therefore met in full committee. Soon after the writer entered, he was requested by the chairman to withdraw into an adjoining apartment, whilst they should discuss the proper mode of proceeding on their part, with respect to principles and plans, which if adopted, would require such extensive and fundamental changes, as they knew the writer was about to recommend. There were, as usual, two parties; one desired, and the other opposed examination. The committee discussed this subject with closed doors the whole day, when Mr. Brougham, now Lord Brougham, was directed by the committee, to inform the writer, that the discussion was adjourned to the next morning, to be then resumed; and that he was requested to attend and await the result. He attended from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m., waiting while the discussion continued; at the termination of which, Mr. Brougham again came to inform the writer, that the committee had just then decided, by a very small majority, that he should not be examined.

The impression out of doors was, that the committee could not disprove the truth of the principles, or the soundness of the plans for practice, even to prevent similar future distress; but that they were too far in advance, for the aristocratic views of that period.

Had the plain, simple measures then proposed by the writer, been carried into execution, Great Britain would by this time have saved more than one hundred and fifty millions sterling; crimes would have immensely diminished; a superior practical character would have been formed for the poor; poverty would have gradually disappeared, until poverty would have become unknown, and famine in Ireland or elsewhere, would have been an impossible occurrence. Ireland must yet be saved, by precisely the same principles, with some modifications in practice, as then recommended and rejected. Through these means Ireland may be made to support more than four times its present population, in comfort and security hitherto unknown in the history of that island, nor can it be made to become permanently prosperous by any other means.

In 1817, as will appear by reference to the *Times*, and every other daily morning and evening paper then published in London, the writer held public meetings in the City of London Tavern, of deep interest and high excitement to the political, religious, commercial and social world.

He held these meetings to denounce, in the most open and public manner, the fundamental errors of the existing system of the world, and to explain the causes, hidden from the multitude, of the ignorance, poverty, discontent, crime and misery of which all then loudly complained, and again to propose the remedy which could alone ever remove those evils.

This rejection and denunciation of the fundamental errors of latitudes and longitudes, alone then prevented, and until now have retarded, the adoption of his plans for general practice.

These proceedings were widely circulated wherever the English language was known, and they were translated into many other languages; but they were naturally opposed by old vested rights, the ignorant, and by the educated errors of latitudes and longitudes. The world has been hitherto governed by these local errors; the time has arrived for it to be governed by universal, unchanging principles, favorable to permanent virtue, excellence and happiness.

In 1818 he visited the continent of Europe, and on his tour he addressed two memorials to the Congress of Sovereigns, held in Aix-la-Chapelle, which memorials were presented to the Congress by the late Lord Castlereagh. They explained in detail the causes of the continually increasing distress of the producing classes, and the future danger of the non-producing classes, unless the governments could and would provide means to stay and prevent this evil and danger. These memorials were afterwards stated to be the most interesting documents presented at that Congress.

On this tour, which was made in company with the celebrated Cuvier and Professor Pictet, of Geneva, the writer was introduced to Laplace, Humboldt, and the leading ministers, statesmen, and philosophers of France and Switzerland, and, among others, through the late Duke of Kent, to the then Duke of Orleans, now his Majesty the King of the French. The writer's chief object in taking this journey was to ascertain the actual state of education as it existed in the most celebrated establishments in France, Switzerland and Germany. Professor Pictet having been several years in France, one of the four commissioners of education, as well as ten years Member of the Tribunal in France, and for many years, at the head of literature in Switzerland. The writer had by this time ascertained from his own experience the overwhelming influence and importance of education; and how easily, by a proper combination of circumstances, it would be to make any population rational or irrational; but that hitherto the principles and practices competent to produce the former character, had been unknown, or withheld from the public, and therefore all nations were systematically educated to think and act irrationally on principles of some of the local errors of latitude and longitude.

To know what was doing in the most advanced educational establishments, he visited the principal seminaries of instruction in Paris, and Switzerland. The best he saw were Fellenbergs, at Hofwell, Pestalozzi, at Yverden, and Father—at Friburg. These, for their respective objects, were good in manner, and for the attainment of particular branches of knowledge, but the essential principles for forming a superior character in temper, mind, charitable spirit, and conduct, were unknown there, as now every where over the world.

In 1820, through a report, requested from him by the county of Lanark, Scotland, he gave the full details of a plan for relieving the public distress then prevalent throughout Great Britain and Ireland. This report was widely circulated among the authorities of Europe and America, as well as among the population of Great Britain. In an official report of a committee appointed by the county this report was highly commended.

In 1822 he visited Ireland, examined the causes of its discontent, poverty of the poor, and danger to the aristocracy; held most exciting meetings, fully attended by all ranks, in the Rotunda, in Dublin, and there explained the causes of, and remedies for the sufferings of the poor and the fears of the rich. These proceedings were also widely circulated in the newspapers and other more permanent publications. In 1824 he, for the first time, crossed the Atlantic to the United States—communicated his ideas confidentially to

all the ex-Presidents then living, from John Adams the elder to John Quincy Adams, the younger, including Mr. Monroe, the then President, and to the leading public men of the United States. In the spring of 1825, he delivered to a numerous audience, including President Monroe, and the President elect, John Quincy Adams, the two lectures from the Speaker's chair in the House of Representatives, Henry Clay being Speaker at the first lecture, and Secretary of State at the second, given a week subsequent to the first. In these lectures, the fundamental errors, whence arise all the evils of the existing state of society, were fully explained, with the causes which have produced them; and, also, the truths and benefits of the new system, with the means of obtaining them in practice. These lectures were most numerously attended, and extremely well received; and such were the impressions made by them, that the Judges of the Supreme Court, on the morning after the concluding lecture, came in a body to the writer's hotel, with Chief Justice Marshall at their head, to thank him, in an especial manner, for the lectures which he had delivered upon subjects so interesting and nationally important. After visiting Mr. Adams, Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, he lectured generally to large audiences throughout the United States—from New Orleans in the South, to Boston in the North—from Illinois in the West, to New York in the East; passing several times between the United States and Great Britain from 1825 to 1828.

In 1828, official parties connected with Mexico and some of the South American States, with several large proprietors of lands granted to them by the Mexican government in Texas, applied to the writer and urged him, with great earnestness, to ask from the government of Mexico, as a free gift, the province of Coahuila and Texas, in which to establish a government of peace (on the principles so long advocated by him) between the then Republic of Mexico and the United States of North America. He investigated the motives of these parties; found them sincere and well-intentioned; he then communicated the subject to the British and North American governments, and was encouraged by them to proceed; he then addressed a memorial to the Mexican government, Victoria being President, and a liberal administration in power. In a month after forwarding the memorial to Mexico, the writer followed it, and was extremely well received by the authorities there, who became greatly interested in his views; he was informed that the gift of the government and territory of Coahuila and Texas was not with the general Government, but at the disposal of the population of the province. The Government of Mexico, being however very desirous that the writer should establish the practical system of peace which he proposed, between the two republics; that such a government might become an example to themselves and other civilized nations, offered him, as a free gift, the frontier territory on the American border of the Mexican republic, extending fifty leagues in breadth, and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific ocean, bordering the whole way on the United States, which territory the General Government has retained to be at its own disposal. This liberal offer was accepted, on the condition that the Mexicans and all others, who should settle within this territory, should enjoy perfect religious liberty. The President then informed the writer that he and his cabinet had, after considering the writer's memorial, determined to introduce, to the next Congress, a bill to place the religion of Mexico upon the same liberal foundation as it was then in the United States of North America. With this promise the writer was satisfied. The Government faithful to it, brought in the bill, was opposed!

and defeated by the great exertions of the Catholic priesthood, and in consequence, this liberal government was overthrown, and did not return to power for some time.

The writer deemed it useless, under the then superior power of the catholic church, to attempt to pursue this measure further, as, although unknown to the priesthood, as now taught, no permanent good can be effected while they so carefully keep the mind in bondage, and thus ensure the permanent irrationality of all.

In 1829, returning from Mexico, he held for eight days, a most formal public discussion, continued morning and evening, in the city of Cincinnati, with the Rev. Alexander Campbell, to demonstrate the truth of the principles which he advocated, and value of the practices which would necessarily emanate from them. By this discussion he gained a much desired opportunity of placing, in the most conspicuous manner before the public, these invaluable truths, which, as truth, is certain ultimately to prevail, must ere long, overcome the mere created errors and prejudices of all latitudes and longitudes, and instead thereof, introduce universal unchanging truths.

Discovering the long continued and increasing hostile feeling which at this time existed between the Government of Great Britain and the United States, and knowing the evils thence arising to both countries, the writer proceeded from Cincinnati to Washington, and by his representations, induced the American, and afterwards the British Government, to abandon this false position, and to become cordial friends, as members of the same original family, whose interests were so interwoven, that they could not continue enemies to each other, without entailing grievous evils upon the population of both countries. And this good feeling between the two Governments continued unbroken for many years, and it is hoped it may now be renewed and strengthened, and made permanent for the advantage of all nations.

Finding that the upper classes had made a greater progress than the industrious classes, in a knowledge of these "new views," advocated by the writer, and knowing that, previous to success, the prejudices of all parties must be overcome, he turned his attention from 1820, for several years, to arouse the dormant faculties of the working class of Great Britain, and through them of other countries, to the fearful position which the rapid extension of mechanical and chemical science, and power thence resulting, was preparing for them—a power so overwhelming that it would gradually reduce the marketable value of manual labor to the lowest state of mere animal existence. By various means—forming societies, holding public meetings, giving lectures, publishing articles in such newspapers as would venture to insert heterodox opinions opposed to long-established errors—he aroused a new reflective and charitable spirit in this class and introduced temperate and superior habits in their public meetings and places of amusements—inducing them, on these occasions, to exchange ale, spirits and violence for tea, coffee and moderation. Many most important benefits resulted from this new instruction of the working classes, and which are now in active progress. He also taught them that no permanent good could arise to themselves or families from violence, nor until a superior character could be created for them, that would enable them wisely to unite in well-arranged practical measures; to well educate, employ, place, and govern themselves; based on principles of equal justice to all.

In 1838 and '39 the writer visited as many of the European governments as his time and means would permit, including France, Prussia, Bavaria, Austria, and Saxony, with the view of ascertaining if any prepara-

tion was in progress in these States, to abandon old errors and the practices founded on them, and to adopt true principles and the corresponding beneficial practices. The writer's personal communications on these subjects, with Prince Metternich, in Vienna; Baron Humboldt, in Berlin; the King of Bavaria at his country residence: the Prime Minister of Saxony in Dresden; M. Salvandy, and other of the then Ministers of France, with the British Ambassadors to these governments, convinced him that much more preparation to create a general sound public opinion was necessary, before the great change in principle and practice, to which he looked forward, could be accomplished in peace and without confusion or disorder. That before this change, from old errors to new truths, could be effected, the sufferings of the many must continue to increase, until the fears of those in power, for themselves and families, would prove sufficiently strong to induce them to consent to make the desired change; and then it would be discovered that all would be permanently benefitted to an extent, even now, except by a few unimagined. The period for this entire change is evidently approaching, and the condition of Ireland, will prove the turning point to bring about this most to be desired of all events; and thus will permanent good arise from temporary evils.

On the writer's return to Great Britain, he continued to instruct the industrious classes, as far as they could receive and understand his instructions, under the very unfavorable circumstances in which they have been placed. He explained to them the causes in progress, which must, at no distant period, compel many of them to offer their labor even at slow starving prices, and this time is now come.

In this course the writer persevered until 1844, when he again crossed the Atlantic to the United States, with a view of calling the attention of all classes to the mental bondage and physical disadvantages which they experienced from fundamental errors, which perpetuated prejudices of education and local errors of mere latitude and longitude. The present generation are taught to believe, as any generation can easily be taught to believe, any thing however inconsistent and opposed to facts, that they possessed a constitution which gave equal rights to all, while, in practice, it has no pretension to secure a just equality of rights. The system of society throughout the most civilized parts of the world, while based on these fundamental errors, will not admit of any practice approaching to a just equality, yet a just practical equality can alone ever produce virtue and happiness.

This evil is now strongly felt throughout all the States of the Union; and many crude, undigested, and ill-prepared attempts are making by various well meaning reformers, to produce consistency between the declaration of Independence and the practice, laws and customs of society. These parties fail in their object because they do not understand the laws of human nature, or comprehend the extent of the change which is necessary to form a permanent prosperous state of society; or how to create that change in practice. The same crude attempts are also now being made in England, France, Germany, and throughout Europe.

To prepare the American public gradually to comprehend the change now required, he held conventions, public meetings, lectured to large audiences, wrote many articles for the newspapers, and adopted all other means in his power to arouse the attention of all classes and parties, to the errors and evils of the existing system. He returned to Europe in the spring of 1845, to promote these views; re-crossed the Atlantic in the autumn of the same year; always writing during these voyages articles for the public press, which were published after his landing, in the leading free

press of New York, and in the *Union and National Intelligencer*, in Washington.

In the winter of this same year, while attending to the proceedings of Congress, in Washington, he prepared a constitution in perfect accordance with the principles so beautifully expressed in their public proceedings by the founders of this republic; a constitution intended by them, evidently, to become, as knowledge increased, a pure democracy of equal rights, and a just practical equality. To the constitution proposed by the writer, he appended detailed reasons for each law; showing their uniform consistency with each other, with the laws of nature, and with the fundamental facts from which those laws have been deduced. And there is no other sure criterion of truth, than this undeviating consistency. This constitution he recommended for consideration to the New York State Convention, which had met at Albany, to consider what change or improvement could be made in the constitution of that State. The writer afterwards twice attended the convention in person, and delivered a discourse to its members in their hall, granted for that purpose. Many members approved of this new constitution, but the minds of others were, on State affairs, quite inexperienced, and altogether unprepared for the consideration of such important national measures. In consequence, small benefit was derived from that fine opportunity to form a consistent and superior constitution for the State of New York.

The Oregon question now threatened war between the United States and Great Britain, and two nations springing from the same origin were about to injure each other to the extent of their power, aided by many newly invented weapons of warfare of fearful destruction; and thus plunge into a conflict of unknown results disastrous to both parties, for a territory of little value, and of less consequence to their respective populations to which Government it might now be nominally appropriated.

To prevent this mad proceeding the writer interested himself with considerable effect on both sides of the water; and for this purpose passed over early in the spring of 1846 to Great Britain, returning, after a few days residence in London, to the United States.

On his arrival he found the United States had commenced war with Mexico; and being apprehensive that these hostile proceedings might lead to a war with Great Britain, the writer again returned to London to explain to the new administration, such views as occurred to him of the impolicy, inutilty and injustice of interference. His own conviction was that the war would soon sicken both parties of these worse than useless contests, and thus prepare the way for a better feeling, and by degrees, a cordial union between the two republics, highly beneficial to both, and to the world.

From this mission the writer again returned to the United States, arriving at New York in September last; thus crossing the Atlantic four times in less than six months.

On his arrival in New York, many articles of a public character, preparatory to the present object which he had written during the return voyage, were published in the daily papers of that city, while others were afterwards published in the *Union and National Intelligencer*, at the city of Washington, where he arrived just previous to the Meeting of Congress, the proceedings of which he carefully watched.

Perceiving by the signs of the times in Europe as well as in America, that a new era in the history of nations was approaching, and the canes of revolutions rapidly advancing, he presented two memorials to the Senate of this Congress, with a view, if possible, to instigate that body to enter into a full investigation

of this, by far now, the most important and deeply interesting of all subjects—but he found the war, and the coming Presidential election, had pre-occupied the Senator's attention who, in fact, were unprepared for such national investigation, which they said constitutionally belonged to the State governments.

This is the outline of some of the measures adopted by the writer, preparatory to those now to be explained in this manifesto.

It is evident, the world is now in a dilemma. It continually exclaims that something is fundamentally wrong. The new facts discovered, and the progress of science within the last century, are too much opposed to old mysteries, and doctrines to be reconciled.

The world must return back to imaginary fables, and authoritative instruction in mystics, or it must advance to a new era, based on facts, supported by "truth without mystery, mixture of error, or fear of man."

But the world cannot now return back, it must therefore advance, and progress from error to truth.

It may be asked, who are the proper parties to lead the way to accomplish this great moral victory for the world?

The answer is obvious, the great public assemblies of the three most advanced nations of modern times—namely, the Parliament of Great Britain, the Legislatures of the United States of North America, and Legislative Chambers of France.

The great revolution approaching the civilized world, must be yet wisely and temperately introduced, and conducted by these safe conservative powers, whose public discussions will gradually prepare the public for the great inevitable change in principle and practice, which the advanced state of science, and the consequences with which it is fraught, now imperatively demand for all nations.

The materials for permanent universal prosperity, and great improvements in the character of the human race, are superabundant in all nations; and it is the interests of governments and people, that open public measures to effect the change should be no longer delayed.

This manifesto is now published to introduce the subject into these Legislative assemblies which take the lead in the civilized world.

It is true, it is not upon record, that any member of either of these assemblies has ever uttered one sentence, indicative that he understood the real cause of the miseries of life, or the only remedies for them; and yet, their want of moral courage, or their prudence not prematurely to oppose the prejudices of latitude and longitude, or local ignorances, may have restrained them from openly declaring these all-important truths, and kept their language within their known, and well understood, conventionalities of each assembly, but which ought no longer to exist.

The proceedings of these assemblies hitherto, have been mere surface legislation, with speeches on the most useless or petty affairs, and always on false principles; hence the present ignorance, poverty, disunion, crime and misery so general throughout Christendom and all nations, and hence the language of falsehood, and conduct of deception, prevalent among all people; with wars to murder, plunder and oppress each other; all demonstrative proof of the past and present miserable irrationality of the human race.

The famine of Ireland, amid a world of wealth, its illimitable means of increase, and the general disordered condition of society, will terminate this unnatural and irrational state of human existence. It is known that wealth may be easily created annually, greatly to exceed the wants or rational desires of society—and that it may be beneficially and justly distributed to the satisfaction of all.

That the means are now well known to give to all a valuable physical, mental, moral and practical character. That most advantageous employment, physical and mental, wisely combined, may be permanently provided for all.

That each one may be well governed and cared for, from birth, beneficially for the individual and society,

That, in fact, the means abound to well-place each one from birth to death, greatly to the well being and happiness of all.

The accomplishment of these results may be now made, upon proper principles, more easy of practice than to construct railways.

There is now a superfluity of land, and materials of every description, of manual labor, of scientific power, of skill, and capital, with means of illimitable increase, to commence this change over Europe and America, without delay. The poverty, crimes, and degradation of humanity, cry aloud for its commencement to stay the miseries of the millions, and the trained extravagant disunion and destructive contests arising from the ignominious competition of all.

These are some of the leading subjects which necessity will henceforth make the chief objects of discussion in these popular assemblies of the civilized world; if, indeed, such a state of existence as that now suffered by Ireland can be called civilized.

But the questions of paramount importance, which should first engage the attention of these assemblies, are—1st. What are the unchanging laws of nature respecting humanity?—2d. Has society been hitherto based on those laws or upon human imaginations?—3. Would not the laws of nature, if universally established, terminate forever falsehood, ignorance, poverty, disunion, the evil passions and all crimes?—4th. Is it not now the interest of all that these laws, and not men's laws in opposition to them, should govern all the proceedings of the human race?—5th. Are there any real obstacles, except ignorance to prevent the introduction of these laws, and the superior practices which would necessarily emanate from them?—6th. Are not all men now made of necessity, creatures of the latitude and longitude in which they are born, trained and educated?—7th. Does not education, imperfect as it hitherto has been, made the chief difference between the ignorant peasant and polished prince?—8th. Could not all be, advantageously for all, well educated?—9th. Has any human being ever yet been educated in any part of the world, except on principles of falsehood and deception? If practicable by a change of irrational for rational circumstances, would it not be most desirable to educate all from birth on principles of truth and honesty?—10th. Would it not be advantageous to give a superior character for practice, to all as far as their natural powers would admit?—11th. With the immense superfluous means, acquired through the progress of science and of general knowledge to create wealth, is there any natural necessity or one good reason why any individual should be so placed as to be liable to experience, the evils of poverty, or at any time, the fear of it?—12th. With the newly acquired knowledge of the science or manufacture of character, is there any real necessity, or utility, in permitting one individual, henceforth, to have an inferior character formed for him, much less to be allowed to grow up in ignorance, and to acquire bad and evil habits?—13th. Has society or the individual the most power in creating the circumstances which form the character of each?—14th. In this respect, what power, from birth, has the individual in the formation of his own character opposed to society, and what power has society in opposition to the individual?—15th. Is it the highest permanent interest of society that a good practical character should

be formed from birth for all; or that some, through the neglect of society or by design, should have bad or inferior characters formed for them?—16th. Is it the interest of society that some should be born to poverty, and placed from birth amidst inferior and vicious circumstances, or that all should be born to affluence and placed from birth amidst superior and virtuous circumstances, only?—17th. Has society the means and power to place all from birth amidst inferior and vicious, or superior and virtuous circumstances?—18th. Are inferior and vicious circumstances, or superior and virtuous circumstances the most economical?—19th. Are inferior and vicious, or superior and virtuous circumstances the most easily to be controlled and well-governed?—20th. Is it for the interest of society that any one of its members should be placed from birth in the midst of inferior circumstances, seeing that man is, to an illimitable extent, the creature of circumstances; and more especially, when society has the most ample means and power to place all, from and before birth, in the midst of superior, virtuous and most rational circumstances?—21st. Does it indicate a knowledge of human nature in the governments and people who permit the continuance of such places as the Five Points in New York; St. Giles in London; or similar places any where?—22d. Is it the most desirable for the family of man to be trained from birth in the pure language of truth and the straight forward conduct of honesty, and placed within circumstances devoid of motives to falsehood or any practice of dishonesty; or to be regularly initiated in the language of falsehood, and the conduct of deception?—23. What is the difference in money value to society, between a human being trained from his birth, within circumstances to make him ignorant, idle, to acquire bad habits; and one placed within other circumstances, to form him to acquire real knowledge—to be beneficially active, without inferior and with good habits, temper and manner?—24th. And with a view to conscious existence hereafter, succeeding the death of the individual, which of these two characters will be the best prepared for future happiness?

Other equally important questions, of lasting interest to the human race, will necessarily arise from these, and supersede the past and present erroneous, injurious, and far worse than useless legislation, about questions of mere party politics, or how to punish crime, partially relieve poverty, or make useless laws on false principles always productive of evil; or how, by artificial means, to overcome nature's unchanging laws, which can alone make man good, charitable, kind, healthy, wise, and happy—or how to train all from birth in false principles, and most injurious feelings for each other, on account of absurd mystic notions, which no one has ever yet comprehended—or to promote measures, which of necessity, create the oppressor or the oppressed—the rich or the poor to the great injury of both; or to make interminable laws of inconsistency, calculated to create contests and endless evils.

As soon as these public assemblies of the three most advanced nations toward liberty of thought, expression and action, can be made to approach the first common ideas of truth and rationality, they will ascertain that all they have now to do, to permanently secure the well-being and happiness of all people, is to make practical laws. First, to well educate from birth; second, to well employ through life; third, to well place; and fourth, to well govern each from birth to death; and this is all they will ever have to do. And this plain, practical proceeding may be effectually accomplished in any one session of their annual meetings, and thus secure greater advantages for all, than their past centuries of false legislation has effected, or if pursued, the same erroneous notions will effect through all time.

The writer of this manifesto is prepared to prove the truth of these statements to their full extent, and to demonstrate that the means of permanent prosperity and universal happiness are now at the immediate command and control of society; that the famine, poverty, and crimes of Ireland are the necessary results of the false principles on which society has ever been based, and, consequently, on the erroneous mode of governing that island by Great Britain. He now asks the authorities of the world, why in the name of common sense, should the present pandemonium state of society longer be maintained, when the means exist in superfluity to speedily form it into a terrestrial paradise.

Great, glorious, and magnificent as these truths are, and highly beneficent as they will prove in practice, through all future generations, to every child of man, yet this is the earliest period in the history of the human race when they could be made public without the promulgators being doomed to immediate destruction.

ROBERT OWEN.

New York, April 6, 1847.

Robert Owen on the Evil Effect of Party Politics and Disunion.

Society in Europe and America has obtained new power and knowledge, amply sufficient, wisely directed, to secure permanently an advanced condition for all of every rank, class, and sect of both sexes in all civilized countries. An advance which will place all in a much more desirable position than any one has ever yet attained under the system of society which has been alone hitherto known and universally practised.

This system has, through the born ignorance of all men, and the limited experience of our early ancestors

when they imagined it, been based on falsehood, now most palpable to those who can accurately observe facts and derive self-evident conclusion from them. The necessary consequences of these fundamental errors, have been the ignorance, poverty, disunion, hatred, anger, and crime, now so prevalent among all nations and people, and the inferior divisions, circumstances as extensively everywhere existing, and which perpetuates the sins and miseries which all suffer and deplore.

From these fundamental falsehoods have arisen, the parties, classes and sects which keep society in a perpetual, yet ever changing turmoil, to the derangement of the rational faculties of all, and the destruction of their happiness.

See the direful effects of party, class and sect upon the mind, temper, spirit and conduct of all at this day. And who is benefited by these evils? By comparison with poverty and destitution and their inferior external circumstances, a few out of the millions appear to derive advantages, while, in fact, this few are in a pitiable condition, compared to that, in which ALL may be securely placed under a system of society based solely on truth, demonstrated by never changing facts, and by the practices which would necessarily emanate from those truths.

This great change for the benefit of all in practice, will be effected by the most simple, straightforward measures; merely to supersede the inferior circumstances which have naturally emanated from false fundamental principles by those virtuous superior circumstances which will as naturally emanate from true fundamental principles.

ROBERT OWEN.

New York City, 12th April, 1847.

New York, April 14th, 1847.

While this pamphlet was printing this morning, the following letter arrived from Paris, written by a gentleman unknown to the author:

PARIS, January 25, 1847.

DEAR SIR:

I have just published an abridgment of your "Book of the New M. World" in French, compiled with great care,* so as to give a faithful representation of your social system. I endeavor to circulate it widely in France, Belgium, Switzerland, &c. It has been much approved by socialists generally: amongst others by Mr. Joseph Rey, of Grenoble, who in 1828 introduced your ideas here, which he esteems highly.

Communism is spreading gradually and surely on the Continent. In England your persevering efforts have certainly produced a great effect on public opinion and given an enormous impulsion to the spirit of the age.

Monsieur Cabet, who was in communication with you in England some years ago, may be considered the head of the French Communists. He appeared to be very zealous and laborious, but meets with great ob-

stacles in the want of freedom of the press and of association in France and in the poverty of the Communists.

An account of your life and labors drawn up by yourself, is greatly desired. It is to be hoped you will be able to execute so useful and instructive a work.

I hope you meet with encouraging success in America; any favorable intelligence from that quarter will be received with joy by continental socialists. If you have leisure and will be kind enough to write me a line, I shall esteem it a very great favor.

With sincere wishes for your combined health and happiness, I beg to assure you of my unfeigned respect and high estimation.

T. W. THORNTON,

Chez Galignani, 18 Rue Vivienne, Paris.

* Le Livre du Nouveau Monde Moral contenant le Systeme Social Rationnel, base sur les lois de la Nature Humaine par Robert Owen abrege et traduit le l'Anglais par T. W. Thornton. Paris, Paulin, editeur, Rue Richelieu, 63, 1847.

